

IN THE CLAIMS

The following is a complete listing of the claims in this application, reflects all changes currently being made to the claims, and replaces all earlier versions and all earlier listings of the claims:

1. (Currently Amended) An information processing apparatus comprising:

a) input means for inputting variable length packet data

including packet length information indicative of a packet length and encoded information data, and identification flag information for identifying ~~said~~ the packet length information, wherein the identification flag information is not included in the variable length packet data;

b) judgment means for distinguishing the packet length

information included in ~~said~~ the packet data in accordance with ~~said~~ the identification flag information, and judging the packet length of ~~said~~ the packet data; and

c) packet generating means for generating ~~said~~ the variable

length packet data into fixed length packet data in accordance with an output of said judgment means, and transmitting the fixed length packet data.

2. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

clock reference information generating means for generating clock

reference information for use in a time reference during decoding of ~~said~~ the encoded information data,

wherein said packet generating means transmits at least one fixed length packet data provided with the clock reference information generated by said clock reference information generating means within a predetermined time interval.

3. (Original) An apparatus according to claim 2, further comprising:

program specific information generating means for generating program specific information indicative of a program specific of a packet to be transmitted, wherein said packet generating means transmits at least one fixed length packet data provided with the program specific information generated by said program specific information generating means within the predetermined time interval.

4. (Original) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said input means inputs a plurality of types of variable length packet data.

5. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said packet generating means transmits the fixed length packet data provided with ~~said~~ the clock reference information, when no effective fixed length packet data is present.

6. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 3, wherein said packet generating means transmits the fixed length packet data provided with ~~said~~ the program specific information, when no effective fixed length packet data is present.

7. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said the variable length packet data is Packetized Elementary Stream (PES) conforming to ISO/IEC 13818-1, and said the fixed length packet data is Transport Stream (TS) conforming to ISO/IEC 13818-1.

8. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said the clock reference information is Program Clock Reference (PCR) conforming to ISO/IEC 13818-1.

AI 9. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said the program specific information is Program Specific Information (PSI) conforming to ISO/IEC 13818-1.

10. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 7, wherein said the information data is image data, and is encoded in conformity with ISO/IEC 13818-2.

11. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said packet generating means inserts a stuffing byte when the code length of said the variable length packet data is less than the code length which can be inserted to said the fixed length packet data.

12. (Currently Amended) An information processing apparatus comprising:

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a) encoding means for encoding information data, generating variable length packet data including packet length information indicative of a packet length and generating identification flag information for identifying ~~said~~ the packet length information, wherein the identification flag information is not included in the variable length packet data; and

b) converting means for distinguishing the packet length information included in ~~said~~ the packet data in accordance with the identification flag information generated by said encoding means, judging the packet length of ~~said~~ the variable length packet data, and converting ~~said~~ the variable length packet data to fixed length packet data,

wherein said encoding means is connected to said converting means via at least a data bus for transmitting ~~said~~ the variable length packet data and a flag bus for transmitting ~~said~~ the identification flag information.

13. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 12, wherein said encoding means comprises clock reference information generating means for generating clock reference information for use in a time reference during decoding of ~~said~~ the encoded information data, and said encoding means is connected to said converting means via a clock reference bus for transmitting ~~said~~ the clock reference information.

14. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 12, wherein said converting means is connected to a plurality of said encoding means via ~~said~~ the data bus and ~~said~~ the flag bus which are common.

15. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 12, wherein ~~said the~~ variable length packet data is Packetized Elementary Stream (PES) conforming to ISO/IEC 13818-1, and ~~said the~~ fixed length packet data is Transport Stream (TS) conforming to ISO/IEC 13818-1.

16. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 13, wherein ~~said the~~ clock reference information is Program Clock Reference (PCR) conforming to ISO/IEC 13818-1.

AI 17. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 12, wherein ~~said the~~ information data is image data, and is encoded in conformity with ISO/IEC 13818-2.

18. (Currently Amended) An information processing apparatus comprising:

- a) first generating means for generating variable length packet data including encoded information data;
- b) second generating means for generating and transmitting first fixed length packet data from ~~said the~~ variable length packet data generated by said first generating means; and
- c) generating means for generating clock reference information for use in a time reference during decoding of ~~said the~~ encoded information data,

wherein said second generating means generates ~~the~~ second fixed length packet data including ~~said the~~ the clock reference information and transmits the second fixed length packet data within a predetermined time interval, and transmits the second fixed length packet data ~~including said clock reference information~~ when there is no effective first fixed length packet data.

A (19. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 18, wherein ~~said the~~ the variable length packet data is Packetized Elementary Stream (PES) conforming to ISO/IEC 13818-1, and ~~said the~~ the fixed length packet data is Transport Stream (TS) conforming to ISO/IEC 13818-1.

20. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 18, wherein ~~said the~~ the clock reference information is Program Clock Reference (PCR) conforming to ISO/IEC 13818-1.

21. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 18, wherein ~~said the~~ the information data is image data, and is encoded in conformity with ISO/IEC 13818-2.

22. (Currently Amended) An information processing apparatus comprising:

a) first generating means for generating variable length packet data including encoded information data;

b) second generating means for generating and transmitting first fixed length packet data from ~~said the~~ variable length packet data generated by said first generating means; and

c) generating means for generating program specific information indicative of a program specific of ~~said the first~~ fixed length packet data, wherein said second generating means generates ~~the~~ second fixed length packet data including ~~said the~~ program specific information and transmits the second fixed length packet data within a predetermined time interval, and transmits the second fixed length packet data ~~including said program specific information~~ when there is no effective first fixed length packet data.

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23. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 22, wherein ~~said the~~ variable length packet data is Packetized Elementary Stream (PES) conforming to ISO/IEC 13818-1, and ~~said the~~ fixed length packet data is Transport Stream (TS) conforming to ISO/IEC 13818-1.

24. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 22, wherein ~~said the~~ program specific information is Program Specific Information (PSI) conforming to ISO/IEC 13818-1.

25. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 22, wherein ~~said the~~ information data is image data, and is encoded in conformity with ISO/IEC 13818-1.

26. (Currently Amended) An information processing method comprising the steps of:

inputting variable length packet data including packet length information indicative of a packet length and encoded information data, and identification flag information for identifying ~~said the~~ packet length information, wherein the identification flag information is not included in the variable length packet data;

distinguishing the packet length information included in ~~said the~~ packet data in accordance with ~~said the~~ identification flag information, and judging the packet length of ~~said the~~ packet data; and

generating ~~said the~~ variable length packet data into fixed length packet data in accordance with ~~said the~~ judgment result and transmitting the fixed length packet data.

27. (Currently Amended) An information processing method comprising the steps of:

generating variable length packet data including encoded information data;

generating and transmitting first fixed length packet data from ~~said the~~ generated variable length packet data; and

generating clock reference information for use in a time reference during decoding of ~~said the~~ encoded information data,

wherein said fixed length packet generating step includes a step of generating ~~the~~ second fixed length packet data including ~~said the~~ clock reference

information and transmitting the second fixed length packet data within a predetermined time interval, and a step of transmitting the second fixed length packet data ~~including said clock reference information~~ when there is no effective first fixed length packet data.

28. (Currently Amended) An information processing method comprising the steps of:

generating variable length packet data including encoded information data;

generating and transmitting first fixed length packet data from ~~said~~ the generated variable length packet data; and

generating program specific information indicative of a program specific of said first fixed length packet data,

wherein said fixed length packet data generating step includes a step of generating ~~the~~ second fixed length packet data including ~~said~~ the program specific information and a step of transmitting the second fixed length packet data within a predetermined time interval, and a step of transmitting the second fixed length packet data ~~including said program specific information~~ when there is no effective first fixed length packet data.

29. (Original) A storage medium in which an information processing program according to claim 26 is stored and which can be read by a computer.

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30. (Original) A storage medium in which an information processing program according to claim 27 is stored and which can be read by a computer.

31. (Original) A storage medium in which an information processing program according to claim 28 is stored and which can be read by a computer.
